Embassy comment on the UK's plans to provide Challenger 2 main battle tanks to Kiev

Russian Embassy in LondonJanuary 15, 2023

The UK Government in its press-release following the phone conversation between Prime-Minister Rishi Sunak and President of Ukraine Vladimir Zelensky on January 14 confirmed in principle its plans to provide Challenger 2 tanks to Ukraine.

This could hardly have come across as newsworthy to most people. Public opinion had been deliberately conditioned in the past weeks to accept this step in a process that was at times reminiscent of a poor theatrical production. The principal decision had obviously been precooked, and its announcement tied to coincide with the forthcoming "Ramstein" format meeting.

The United Kingdom seems to be intent on reaffirming its status as top NATO Member State in terms of arming Kiev and escalating the conflict.

The initiative to ship modern samples of heavy armour to the Ukrainian military is meant to serve as precedent and to persuade other, less belligerent Western countries to follow suit and

provide their own tanks to the Ukrainian armed forces.

Those among the British public who are growing weary of warfare and harbour a desire for peace, are in for a disappointment: one really cannot put out a fire with petrol. Bringing tanks to the conflict zone, far from drawing the hostilities to a close, will only serve to intensify combat operations, generating more casualties, including among the civilian population.

Yet this, ironically, fully conforms to London's objectives of prolonging the conflict. Hence the belligerent official rhetoric and the thorough disregard for the idea, voiced by Russia on several occasions, to resort to a negotiated settlement.

In short, we are witnessing yet more proof of the UK authorities' disdain for the lives of ordinary Ukrainians, as well as its ever-growing direct involvement in the conflict.

As for the Challenger 2 tanks, they will hardly help the Ukrainian military turn the tide in the field. Yet they will become legitimate large-scale targets for the Russian forces.